PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) While it is not correct to say that militancy has increased in J&K, but it is true that efforts are continued to be made by the elements sponsored and supported from across the border to keep up violence and vitiate the environment in the State through attacks on soft targets, Indiscriminate use of explosive devices without regard to lives of innocent civilians, efforts to enforce 'bandhs' and 'hartals' particularly when militants are killed, in a bid to try and disrupt normal life and derail the political and democratic system. A close and continuous watch is being kept on the situation and all necessary efforts, including sustained operations against terrorists and subversive elements, are being made to ensure that these designs are not allowed to succeed. The Government both at the State and Central levels are taking necessary measures on a continuing basis to see that complete and abiding peace can be brought about in the State at the earliest.

Autonomy to CBI

5079. SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to give over all autonomy to CBI;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) to (c) The Central Bureau of Investigation derives its powers from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 and enjoys full functional autonomy.

[Translation]

Investment by British Oil Companies

5080. KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have requested British Oil Companies engaged in exploration work to invest in India in view of likely increase in demand of Petroleum products in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the British Oil Companies thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R BAALU) : (a) to (c) There is no such specific request by the Govt. However, under the New Exploration Licensing Policy announced recently all Indian and foreign companies are welcome to invest in oil Exploration work in India, including British oil companies.

Fraud in Bank of India

5081. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item capitoned "Bank of India Dhokhadhari Mamla Janch Aage Badhane Ki Anumati Thande Baste Me" appearing in the 'J.V.G. Times' dated 23rd April, 1997;

(b) if so, the details of the progress made in the investigation initiated three years ago;

(c) whether any time limit has been fixed to get the investigation completed into the fraud of 89,92,815 dollars committed in the New York Branch of Bank of India;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Government have seen the news item referred to in the question.

(b) to (e) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have reported that a regular case was registered in February, 1994 against the then Senior Vice President of New York branch of Bank of India and others regarding a fraud committed in Bank of India's New York branch. The field investigation in India in this case has been completed. Since the investigation on various vital points is required to be conducted in the United States of America (USA), action has been initiated to file application in the Court for issuance of Letter Rogatory. CBI have further reported that as extensive investigation is required to be conducted by the US authorities, no time limit can be fixed at this stage for completion of the investigation in this case.

Use of Hindi

5082. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to propagate the application of Hindi in the offices of Ministry of External Affairs;

(b) whether Government propose to train personnel who can use various electronic gadgets, e.g. Telex, Computers etc. in Hindi also; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) All efforts for propagation of Hindi in the offices of the Ministry of External Affairs are being made in keeping with the provisions of the programme for implementation of the official language policy of the Union. Official Language Implementation Committees have been constituted in 85 Indian Missions/Posts abroad and action will be taken to establish such Committees in the remaining offices. Efforts would also continue to provide books, literature, audio visual material, bi-lingual computer software and other relevant material to these offices for promotion of the use of Hindi

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Action is underway to procure and supply appropriate bi-lingual computer software to the offices of Ministry of External Affairs for enabling enhanced use of Hindi. This would also help in faster communication of messages and other texts in Hindi through the modern channels of communication, namely, E-mail and fax.

Non-Deposit of EPF of Employees

5083. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the employers of Artherten Mill, Kanpur, U.P. have not deposited Rupees 2.40 crores of EPF of labourers and nor sent its audit report to the commissioner's office since 1991 resulting in loss of hope in the workers to receive their money;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to make any efforts for preparing the balance sheet depositing the amount of EPF and for distribution of salary in time; and

(c) if so, the time by which it will be done ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir. Employers of Artherten Mill, Kanpur (UP) have not deposited the P.F. dues to the tune of about Rs. 2.50 crores and have also not submitted returns to P.F. Office since 1991-92.

(b) and (c) At present, the establishment is registered with BIFR for rehabilitation. While Government is fully committed to ensure payment of salary to the workers in time, at times there are delays in making such payments due to financial constrainsts . Account slips for the year 1990-91 have been issued to the employees. Account slips for the subsequent years can be issued only on receipt of the subscription from the management.

Outstanding Customs/Excise Duty

5084. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of outstanding Customs/Excise duty as on date;

(b) whether the Government machinery have failed to recover this outstanding amount of customs duty;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the remedial measures taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House

Implementation of Reservation

5085. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to draw a panel to review the measures being taken to fill up the reserved posts;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) to (c) It will not be in the public interest to give information in regard to composition, terms of reference etc. of the Cabinet Committee.

[English]

Implementation of Labour Laws in the Industries

5086. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether majority of industries in Delhi are not paying minimum wages to its workers and the labour courts had totally failed in their duty of implementing various labour laws;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to see that various labour laws are strictly implemented by the industrialists ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) As per information received from the Government of Dehi majority of industries in Delhi are paying minimum wages, though from time to time a few complaints regarding non-payment of minimum wages by the employers are also received.

(b) and (c) During the year 1996, 7194 complaints regarding non/less payment of minimum wages were received by the Government of Delhi. In 1187 cases, the employers rectified the shortcomings and an amount of Rs. 48,36, 495/- was got paid to the workers. The prosecutions were launched against 429 defaulting managements for violation of various provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. The enforcement machinery, in order to secure effective implementation of Minimum Wages Act, make regular inspection of the establishments covered under the Act and take necessary action whenever any violation of the Act comes to their notice.

Benami Accounts in Banks

5087. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Questions No. 432 and 1119 dated November 22, 1996 and February 28, 1997 regarding "Benami accounts in Banks" and state :

(a) whether the information has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to remedy the situation ?